

# BHAI JAITA AS A WARRIOR

**Sarabjit Kaur**, M.Phil. Research Scholar, History Department, Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo.

**Dr. Sukhjit Kaur Bhullar**, Assistant Professor, H.O.D., Department of History, Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo.

**ABSTRACT:** *Bhai Jaita was the Army General of Guru Gobind Singh. He fought wars and battles with full courage. He participated in many battles of Anandpur Sahib and ultimately fought the battle of Chamkaur Sahib under the supervision of Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Jaita took part in the first attack of Mughals at Anandpur Sahib, Bhangani, Nadain, Hussaini, Nirmohgarh, Kalmot and Basali. He killed Bassi kalan Police officer Jabar Jang Khan and participated in 14 other battles. In all the religious battles fought by Guru Gobind Singh, Bhai Jaita remained in close company with Guru ji. He was not only the main beater of Ranjit Nagara drum but a most able war strategist besides being one of those who leads from the front in battle line. Guru Gobind Singh always used to consult Bhai Jaita while Chalking Out battle strategy.*

Bhai Jaita was a Sikh General a personal accomplice, companion and friend to Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last guru of sikhs. He was born in Patna, in 1661 to father Sada Nand and Mata Premo who belonged to the community of rangrettas. The earlier part of his life was spent in Patna learning the art of warfare and weaponry. He also learn to swim, ride horses and gained some skills at kirtan & music.<sup>1</sup> Bhai Jaita had been the personal helper of Guru Teg Bahadur. After the death of Guru, his love and respect in Guru's family increased more as Guru Gobind Singh had blessed him as '*Rangreta Guru ka Beta*' meaning that he was like Guru's own son. Bhai Jaita was such a brave person who remained with Guru Gobind Singh for a long time. When Guru Gobind Singh started preparations for the battle, he needed a wise and experienced soldier. Bhai Jaita was the foremost choice in that need. He remained in the company of an unmatched warrior Guru Teg Bahadur for a long time; who was very adept in sword. Guru Gobind Singh decided to assign the responsibility of imparting training to the youth to Bhai Jaita. Brave soldier Bhai Jaita imparted training to the children and youth in archery, shooting and firing. Then, some additions were being done daily in Guru's shrine. Guru Sahib started going for hunting. He felt the need of beating of a drum. Guru collected necessary wares and got prepared a big drum which was named '*Ranjit Nagara*'. Bhai Jaita was appointed the beater of that drum. He served as the main beater of *Ranjit Nagara* continuously for almost twenty years.<sup>2</sup>

The policy of Aurangzeb was the proliferation of Islamic faith, for the achievement of which, he employed every tool. When the tales of valour of Guru Gobind Singh reached Aurangzeb, he sent a directive to the kings of hill states to finish Guru. The kings of hill states explored many pretexts to start a war with Guru but he always advised to do preaching and recite the name of the Almighty. He always did acts of benevolence. Guru never tortured anyone nor troubled the kings. Ultimately the Kings found a pretext and asked Guru not to beat the drum as it produced a horrible sound. For the sake of their safety, they asked Guru to leave the place and settle elsewhere but Guru Gobind Singh gauged their diplomacy and proceeded towards the territory of Nahan Naresh.<sup>3</sup> The King of Nahan state, Medhni Parkash requested Guru Ji to settle in his territory. Accepting the offer of the King, Guru ji reached Nahan on April 15, 1684 with his Sikh followers, from here, Guru settled at Paonta Sahib, a hill-bounded area in the lap of natural sights situated on the banks of river Yamuna.<sup>4</sup> After a short period, Aurangzeb wrote a letter to his follower Bhim Chand to attack and defeat Guru Gobind Singh. He launched an attack and a battle started.<sup>5</sup>

The leader of hill states Bhim Chand Bilaspuria demanded valuable articles from Guru ji for the marriage of his son Ajmer Chand. Sensing his bad intention, Guru ji refused him. Bhim Chand then approached other kings of hill states like Kirpal, the king of Katoch, Hari Chand, king of Handur, Gopal Rai, the king of Guler, Fateh Shah, king of Srinagar, king of Jaswal and made a common forum. Aurangzeb also sent his chosen soldiers. Guru ji made necessary preparations and selected Bhangani as the place for battle. Bhangani is six kilometres away from Paonta Sahib.<sup>6</sup>

Due to timely information, Guru Gobind Singh had chalked out appropriate strategy for the battle. It was decided to fight the battle at Bhangani which was nine miles away from Paonta Sahib on the banks of river Gir along the big stream at a place called Chuharpur which was surrounded by the hills. As per the strategy, soldiers were positioned atop the hills to block the return passage of the enemy. Although four hundred Pathan soldiers recruited at the behest of Peer Budhu Shah of Sadhora, joined the enemy by doing deceit with Guru ji, but Kale Khan remained positioned at Sidak along with his 100 Pathan soldiers. Peer Budhu Shah also reached Paonta Sahib by taking along his two brothers and seven hundred followers. A Sikh carpenter of *Kansi* named Bhai Rama also reached along with two wooden cannons. Five sons namely Mange Shah, Jeet Mall, Mohri Chand, Gulab Rai and Ganga Ram of Guru's paternal aunt Beero also reached there. Guru also released Bhai Ram Koir and Kale Khan for the protection of Paonta Sahib. On September 16, 1688, a unique battle started under the command of Bhai Jaita with the beating of the drum '*Ranjit Nagara*'.<sup>7</sup>

Guru Gobind Singh always specially consulted Bhai Jaita in drawing out the strategy of battle. Apart from that, whenever there was a need to instil mental pressure and fear upon the enemy, Guru Gobind Singh always put the renowned fighter of his army, Bhai Jaita in the front row. Due to which a mental fear developed in the enemy rendering them incapable of fighting with full might. In that battle too, Guru ji put reach kind of mental pressure of the enemy. As a result of that, Pathans could not fight. They were defeated badly and almost all got killed. Guru Gobind Singh himself killed King Bhim Chand with a single arrow. Guru Gobind Singh came out victorious in that battle.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Neeti Singh, *Shri Gur Katha*, Singh Brothers, 2015, P-19.

<sup>2</sup> Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Bhai Jaita Giri Ka Beta*, Vijay Publisher, New Delhi, 1998, P-93.

<sup>3</sup> Gurmukh Singh, *Bhai Jaita Jiwan to Rachana*, Literature House, Puttigarh, Amritsar, 2003, P-30.

<sup>4</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru Ka Beta*, P-221.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, P-31.

<sup>6</sup> Satbir Singh, *Sada Etahas*, New Book Company, Jalandhar, 1983, P-380.

<sup>7</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru Ka Beta*, P-223.

<sup>8</sup> Naranjan Arfi, *Rangretian Da Etahas*, Literature House, Amritsar, 2016, P-289.

The kings of hill states were under the command of Delhi. They had to pay protection money every year. In the year 1691, they all gave in writing that due to battle with Guru Gobind Singh, they would not be able to pay the protection money. Aurangzeb deemed it as a pretext and sent Governor of Jammu, Mian Khan to collect the protection money sternly. Mian Khan, sent Alif Khan for review rent. Bhim Chand refused to bend but the Kings of hill states understood that without the help of Guru. It was impossible to counter the enemy. They sent a request to Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>9</sup> In reply, Guru assured them that if they repent with true intention and promise good conduct in future, he was ready to render all help to them. Bhim Chand assured Guru that they would do accordingly. Guru collected necessary arms and ammunition for the battle and himself for the help of kings of hill states.<sup>10</sup> Guru reached to Bhai Jaita at Nadaun, taking along a select edband of soldiers. Guru ordered Bhai Jaita to beat the drum with double force. The forces readied themselves for the assault within minutes and there ensued a fierce battle with the royal forces. Bhai Jaita showed his dexterity with the sword in that battle. On the day of March 20, 1691, by inflicting grievous injuries upon the General of Royal forces Alif Khan and King Kirpal Chand Katochia, Guru won the battle easily and Mughal forces ran away from the battlefield. Guru achieved victory in that battle.<sup>11</sup> In the battle of Nadaun, Bhai Jaita fought in the forward line. He inflicted grave injury on Kirpal Chand Katoch and compelled Alif Khan to flee the battlefield along with his army. The talks of bravery of Bhai Jaita spread all-around.<sup>12</sup>

The battle of Hussani or battle of Banjroor took place on March 20, in the year 1695. Guru Gobind Singh started the battle of Nadaun to help the Mughal kings of hill states but these kings had bad intentions and malice for Guru in their hearts. Mughal forces were also feeling let down and wanted to take revenge upon Guru. Dilawar Khan, with an intention to take revenge, sent a brave General Hussain Khan, to make an attack on Guru. Guru Gobind Singh did not feel need to seek anybody's help. He tap the back of his army Chief Bhai Jaita ; he felt excited and the brave forces of Guru ji proceeded forward.<sup>13</sup> Mughal forces were encircled in the fierce battle that took place at *Bajroor*. Bhai Sangat Rai attained martyrdom in that battle but Bhai Jaita killed General Hussain Khan with the fires of his rifles '*Nagini*' and '*Baghni*' and royal forces fled from the battlefield. That battle mainly liquidated the '*Rangars*' (a community name) and Guru ji came out victorious.<sup>14</sup> The defeated Mughal forces had to return. Chief of Guru's forces, Bhai Jaita fell on the feet of Guru ji as a gesture of thanks giving. Guru ji patted his back with his hands for quite some time and his lips uttered many blessings.<sup>15</sup>

The first battle of Anandpur took place on August 31, in the year 1700. Bhai Jaita had an important role in that battle. Kings of hill states namely Bhim Chand Kehluriye, Bir Singh Jassawaliye and Madan Pal Sirmauri, by then had become aware of the strong hands of Guru ; so they requested for help to the Nawab of Sirhind and Aurangzeb. The Nawab of Sirhind had further consultations with Aurangzeb to stop the increasing flow of Guru Gobind Singh's might. With the permission of Aurangzeb, force was sent under the command of Deen Baig and Paide Khan.<sup>16</sup> Kings of hill states encircled Anandpur Sahib in the intervening night of 31<sup>st</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> September. Sikhs troubled the kings of hill states a lot by deploying *guerrilla* warfare. Prince Ajit Singh and Bhai Jaita would suddenly come out from the fortress and after inflicting heavy damage upon enemy, would return back to the fortress.<sup>17</sup> Bhai Jaita and Prince Ajit Singh launched a heavy attack on the retreating soldiers killing many of them. The kings ran away from the battle- field.<sup>18</sup> To save themselves from the ignominy of defeat, kings again launched another heavy attack. Sikhs repulsed the attack with full force and Kings again could not do anything and hence retreated. So far, there was no result of the battle. Immediately thereafter, Yakub Khan and Ali Mardan came with a force of two thousand soldiers to help the Kings. During that, the kings of hill states prepared a cow of the kneaded flour and placed it at the door of the fortress and said that if Guru leave the fortress for ten days, they will stop humiliation. Guru Gobind Singh, at the advice of mother Gujri and some Sikhs, readied himself to go to Kiratpur. He made a halt at five miles before Anandpur Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh also came there and started recitation of hymns at that place for five days; during that period he did not conversed with anyone. So the place was named as *Nirmoh Garh*.<sup>19</sup>

The battle of Nirmoh took place on October 8, in the year 1700 at Nirmoh Garh. At that time, the whole family of Guru Gobind Singh, Bhai Jaita and other chosen Sikhs were present. The deceitful enemy chased Guru Gobind Singh and attacked him. Prince Ajit Singh, Bhai Jaita, Bhai Uday Singh ji, Bhai Bachittar Singh and Guru Sahib faced the enemy with great valour that stunned them. King Ajmer Chand and the gunner showered bombs. Guru killed the gunner on the spot with his arrow. Bhai Jaita killed General Yakub Khan and Ali Mardan on the spot with his guns '*Nagini*' and '*Bhagni*'.<sup>20</sup> Guru directed the Sikhs positioned atop the hill as to where to fire. Wahid Khan was perplexed that Sikhs could fight such a battle. Chief of forces Bhai Jaita was commanding the soldiers as per the directions of Guru. In short, till the fall of night all the enemy forces retreated facing the defeat. Guru Gobind Singh came back to Anandpur Sahib with all of his Sikhs.<sup>21</sup>

The battle of Basali/Kalmot took place on October 20, in the year 1700 between King Ajmer Chand and Guru ji. To thank Guru for his timely help, the king of Basali, Sulahi Chand sent an invitation to Guru. At the request of Sulahi Chand, Guru ji went to Basali for few days. King Ajmer Singh, in cahoots with other kings of hill states, conspired to attack Guru on his way back.<sup>22</sup> In a conspiracy with '*Gujjars*' (shepherd community) and '*Rangars*' of Kalmot, Ajmer Khan blocked the way when Guru ji was returning. But he never knew that accompanying Guru Sahib were fighters like Bhai Jaita and Bhai Singh Sahib who were capable of proving heavy upon thousands of soldiers. But by inflicting a big defeat, Guru ji forced them to run away.<sup>23</sup>

In March 1702, a Cop of Bassi Kalan, Jabarjang Khan, forcibly took away the newly-wed wife of Brahman Devi Dass. The weeping and crying Pandit came to the court of Guru ji and made an appeal. Guru Gobind Singh sent Prince Ajit Singh and Baba Jiwan Singh to Bassi

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, P-384.

<sup>10</sup> Piyara Singh Data, *Inqilabi Yodha*, National Book Shop, Delhi, 1997, P-51.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, P-230.

<sup>12</sup> Dalvir Singh, *Maha Kaav Variaam Akela*, Raghvir Rachna Prakashan, Chandigarh, 1987, P-97.

<sup>13</sup> Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Bhai Jaita Guru Ka Beta*, P-103.

<sup>14</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru Ka Beta*, P-233.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, P-103.

<sup>16</sup> Satbir Singh, *Sada Etihias*, P-407.

<sup>17</sup> Niranjan Arfi, *Rangretion Da Etihias*, P-308.

<sup>18</sup> Baldev Singh, *Panjva Sahibzada*, Lookgeet Parkashan, Chandigarh, 2014, P-325.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, P-309.

<sup>20</sup> Dalvir Singh, *Maha Kaav Variaam Akela*, P-110.

<sup>21</sup> Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Bhai Jaita Guru Ka Beta*, P-112.

<sup>22</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru ka Beta*, P-240.

<sup>23</sup> Niranjan Arfi, *Rangretion Da Etihias*, P-344.

Kalan. They both killed Jabarjang with arrows and after freeing the wife of Pandit from his captivity, restored her to Pandit, with honour. Both Bhai Jaita and Prince Ajit Singh heartily respected each other.<sup>24</sup>

Ajmer Chand launched another attack on Anandpur Sahib on December 8, 1703 and he had to face defeat in that attack too. In that battle also, Bhai Jaita and Prince Ajit Singh exhibited marvels of their fighting skills. Guru Gobind, by then, had become aware of the mischief's of the Kings of hill states and that is why they were scared of Guru. For safety sake, they shifted near the state of Sirhind. The state of Sirhind sent Ajmer Chand to south to contact Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb sent Amir Khan, Nazabat Khan, Robat Khan, Said Chand, Ramzan Khan and Deena Baig against Guru ji by providing them with necessary forces from Delhi. Apart from that, he also ordered the state of Sirhind to present Guru Gobind Singh before him after capturing him alive. The forces of Kings of hill states also joined them and they encircled Anandpur Sahib as a result of which a battle started in February, 1708.<sup>25</sup> In that battle, followers of Guru, Maimun Khan and Saida Beg also participated from Guru's side. Saida Khan was martyred while fighting with Hari Chand. Guru ji individually assigned the command of different sides and forts to Bhai Jaita, Bhai Bachittar Singh, Uday Singh, Maan Singh, Kotha Singh and Prince Ajit Singh. Bhai Jaita, with his guns 'Nagini' and 'Bhagini' killed two commanders of Mughal forces Amir Khan and Haibat Khan. Similarly General Paide Khan and Azim Khan were killed at the hands of Guru ji. Heavy casualties were suffered by the Mughal forces and they fled from the battle field.<sup>26</sup>

The third battle of Anandpur Sahib happened in March, 1704. When Aurangzeb came to know about the defeat of Mughal forces, he sent his soldiers under the command of his brave General Said Khan. Said Khan was a relative of Peer Budhu Shah. Said Khan took a pledge that he will capture Guru Ji alive. Peer Budhu Shah tried to stop him but he did not. He reached Anandpur Sahib along with his army.<sup>27</sup> He made an attack taking along forces of Mughals and kings of hill states. Guru ji ordered Bhai Jaita to strike the drum with double force. A fierce battle ensued. Bhai Jaita, Bhai Uday Singh ji, prince Ajit Singh, Bhachittar Singh and Prince Jhujhar Singh were engaged in fighting with the enemy on different platforms. Bhai Jaita was showering fire on the enemy. The forces of Mughals and that of kings of hill states started disintegrating badly. Saida Khan made a plea in excitement that if Guru ji comes before him, he would fulfil his desire to fight against him. Riding a horse, Guru ji immediately appeared before him and said that he is the Guru of Sikhs; Guru ji challenged him to attack. Saida Khan was amazed to see Guru ji before him. He was not able to pick up a weapon even. He dismounted the horse and put all his weapons in the feet of Guru ji. He abandoned his job and spent all his life in Guru ji's company. Said Khan became a friend of Bhai Jaita.<sup>28</sup> The fourth battle of Anandpur Sahib started on May 15, 1704 and continued till December 18, 1704. In that battle, Bhai Jaita played an important role by employing *Guerrilla* war tactics. Aurangzeb became furious after seeing the pitiable condition of Mughal soldiers and forces of kings of 22 Dharhill states. He sent the commanders of Royal forces of Lahore, Peshawar, Kasoor, Jammu, Jalandhar, Sirhind and forces of Kings of hill states under the commander of Sirhind, Wajid Khan to jointly attack Anandpur Sahib on May 15, 1704. The kings of hill states also joined that Royal Army of ten Lac soldiers along with their forces. Guru ji, with his 1500 Sikh soldiers decided to counter the enemy by doing perfect fortification.<sup>29</sup> There were heavy casualties of Mughal forces. On the other front, Prince Ajit Singh and Baba Jiwan Singh also took heavy toll of enemy. On another front, Guru Gobind Singh himself killed the enemy by challenging them. After the battle of that day, Sikhs had to retreat and enter the Fort after which Mughals encircled it. During the night, Prince Ajit Singh and Bhai Jaita attacked the enemy by coming out of the fort and inflicted considerable harm on them. After seeing that loss, Mughals broadened their encirclement by which the city of Anandpur Sahib and adjoining villages also came within the siege. The ration stopped reaching Anandpur Sahib. The water supply to Anandpur came through a hill stream. Ajmer Chand diverted the flow of that stream to other side. So, in addition to the Sikhs inside the fort, the residents of the city also became scarce in water. That encirclement continued for 7-8 months. The Sikhs inside the Fort started dying with hunger and adversity.<sup>30</sup> All those who were sent for fetching ration got killed. At the end, after conceding the common plea of Mother Gujriji and Sikhs, and to change the venue of battle, the fort of Anandgarh was vacated during the frosty and rainy night of December 19-20, 1704. Guru proceeded toward Kiratpur Sahib and Ghanauli with family and Khalsa forces. The enemy chased them forgetting their agreements and assurances.<sup>31</sup>

On the morning of December 20, 1704, a caravan stopped near Sirsa Nangal village along river Sirsa. It was later part of a dark wintry night. Guru Gobind Singh vacated the fort of Anandpur at night in small groups. All members of Guru's family, five chosen ones and others like great warriors Bhai Jaita accompanied Guru ji. On arrival at the banks of river Sirsa, they organised recitation of hymns of 'Asa di war' (religious verses) early in the morning. Khalsa was trapped from both sides. Battle was going on between both the sides. The menacing flow of river Sirsa was to be overcome, by breaking both the encirclements, Guru Gobind Singh crossed river Sirsa along with his followers.<sup>32</sup> The groups of Prince Ajit Singh and Bhai Uday Singh were standing like a wall to stop the enemy. The darkness of night and cold and fast current of Sirsa devoured many lives of men, women and children. All valuables of Guru including 'Vidya-Dhar' scriptures were destroyed in the currents and Sikhs got disintegrated. The enemy cornered Prince Ajit Singh and Bhai Uday Singh. After knowing that, Bhai Jaita took the halter of the horse in mouth and by holding both the swords in hands, attacked the enemy like blitzkrieg and reached to Guru ji after breaking the encirclement and saving Prince Ajit Singh.<sup>33</sup> Guru ji reached Kotla Nihang after crossing river Sirsa and from here, Prince Ajit Singh and Bhai Jaita, by taking along their elder sons, Bhai Sukha Singh and Bhai Sewa Singh and other Sikhs, met Guru Ji in Kotla Nihang (Ropar) on December 20, 1704.<sup>34</sup>

Guru ji after crossing river Sirsa reached to Chamkaura via Kotla Nihang Khan village Ropar. The estimated number of Sikhs who crossed river Sirsa was 140. By now Guru Sahib had reached very far from the range of Mughal forces at a safe place. He wanted to go straight to the forest area but Chamkaura, with a deceitful intention detained Guru ji at Majra which is known as village Chamkaur Sahib

<sup>24</sup> Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 1979, P-61.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, P-243.

<sup>26</sup> Naranjan Arfi, *Rangretian Da Ithas*, P-247.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, P-347.

<sup>28</sup> Satvir Singh, *Sada Ithas*, P-412.

<sup>29</sup> Dalvir Singh, *Maha Kaav Variaam Akela*, P-97.

<sup>30</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru Ka Beta*, P-247.

<sup>31</sup> Naranjan Arfi, *Rangretian Da Ithas*, P-316.

<sup>32</sup> Satvir Singh, *Sada Itihas*, P-415.

<sup>33</sup> *Main Sakhiyan Sikh Ithas*, Published Sikh Missionary College (Regd.), Ludhiana, 2015, P-13.

<sup>34</sup> Akali Patrika, 22, December, 1994.

today. At a high place in Chamkaura, there was a fortress which was known as the fortress of Chamkaur Sahib.<sup>35</sup> That fortress of *Nambardar* Chamkaura was not cemented. Chamkaura ushered in Guru ji and 40 Sikhs inside the fortress with him and closed the doors. Chamkaura informed Mughal forces. The fortress was encircled.<sup>36</sup>

The battle of Chamkaur started, when Guru ji came to know about the deceit of Chamkaura that he had locked the fortress from outside and informed the regime about Guru's presence inside the fortress, Guru, very patiently and courageously chalked out a strategy for the coming times. First of all Guru ji asked Bhai Jaita to open the locks by jumping across the wall of the fortress. Bhai Jaita came inside after breaking the locks. By the evening of December 21, 1704, ten lac royal forces encircled that un-cemented fortress. Due to onset of night, the forces started taking rest little ahead of the fortress. Guru ji chalked out next day's battle plan. There were only 40 Sikhs inside the fortress. On the morning of December 22, 1704, the recitation of verses started inside the fortress. After the conclusion of the verses, the prayer was performed. At the onset of the day, world's unique war started. Guru ji informed the Sikhs about their respective positions as per the plan. All the four sides of the fortress were commanded by eight Sikhs each. The princes, Bhai Jaita and the five chosen ones remained with Guru Ji atop a minaret. The Generals Nahar Khan, Haibat Khan, Gani Khan, Ismail Khan, Usman Khan, Sultan Khan, khawaja Khijar Khan, Jahan Khan, Nazeeb Khan, Mian Khan, Dilawar Khan, Said Khan, Zabardast Khan and Gulbeg Khan encircle the fortress under the command of Wajid Khan. It was announced by drum beating that if Guru Ji surrender with all men, his life can be spared. But that battle was not for saving life. It was battle for justice, battle against repression, battle for human rights and religious freedom.<sup>37</sup> Whenever Mughal forces tried to climb the fortress by coming near it, the Sikhs entrenched along the fortress opened fire. Bhai Jaita's guns *Nagini* and *Bhagini* when fired simultaneously, it looked like the clouds have burst. Mughal forces retreated from the fortress. The retracting flam beau of Mughal forces was an indication that they are readying for rest after having food. Sikh forces also prepared meal and had it to their heart's content. Far away, Bhai Jaita watched flames of fire at different places amidst glowing flam beau. From both sides of the fortress, Bhai Jaita fired exactly at the place where the flames were appearing. The voices of cries were coming from far away. Both the remaining sides were also fired upon. Mughal forces retreated further. The guns *Nagini* and *Bhagini* continued firing intermittently. Now Mughal forces were not suffering any damage.<sup>38</sup> Next day again, Bhai Jaita struck *Ranjit Nagara* drum at the behest of Guru ji. The entire area echoed with its sound. Bhai Jaita took command of his post. Sitting atop the minaret of the fortress, Guru Gobind Singh showered volleys of arrows. When Mughal Generals Nahar Khan and Ghani Khan tried to climb the wall of the fortress, Guru ji killed one with the arrow and other with the mace. Watching his men being killed like that, General Khawaza Mehmood Ali escaped after hiding himself against the wall.<sup>39</sup> Guru ji was aware of the seriousness of that imbalanced aggression, that few Sikhs would no longer be able to face the huge Muslim force but here the question was not of victory or defeat. The question was that each Sikh was capable of taking on one and quarter lakhs; Sikhs who prefer dying to surrender, a Sikh who fights till end and can never be captured alive by the enemy. Due to the continuity of the battle; when the stock of ammunition and arrows got depleted, Sikhs in groups of five will exit the fortress and carrying Gyano swords keep on attacking the enemy with war cries and attain martyrdom after killing many. When 4-5 such groups were sacrificed, the elder Prince Ajit Singh sought permission of Guru ji to jump in the battle. Prince Ajit Singh was sent to the battle-field along with a group of five Sikhs. Roaring like a lion, Ajit Singh and Sikhs killed hundreds of enemy soldiers to death. Prince Jujhar Singh offered himself for sacrifice before Guru ji. Guru ji sent a group of five Sikhs including Himmatt Singh and Mohkam Singh with the young Prince. Like the earlier groups, Prince Jujhar Singh and other Sikhs while killing hundreds of enemy soldiers finally drank the cup of martyrdom.<sup>40</sup> During that fierce battle, two sons of Bhai Jaita, his father-in-law and Sangat Singh also got sacrificed like other Sikhs.<sup>41</sup> After a day of furious battle, as the sun set, the battle came to an end. Only eleven Sikhs, including Guru Gobind Singh ji were left in the fortress. They were Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Maan Singh, Bhai Sant Singh, Bhai Ram Singh, Bhai Kehar Singh, Nhai Santokh Singh, Bhai Deva Singh, Bhai Katha Singh, Bhai Sangat Singh and Bhai Jiwan Singh.<sup>42</sup> All Sikhs were worried that if in that battle, Guru Gobind Singh also got killed, then who will lead the *Khalsa Panth*. To give a real shape to the tradition of 'Be own- Guru- and- own- disciple', the remaining Sikhs selected 'five beloved ones' from among themselves to whom Guru ji ordered that they shall immediately leave the fortress by night to lead the Sikh faith. Conceding the order of five beloved ones and to dodge the enemy, Guru ji put his dress and crest upon Bhai Jaita, the holder of title of '*Rangreta-Guru-Ka-Beta*'. Guru ji allotted Bhai Jaita the command of the fortress by making him sit upon the minaret of the fortress. Then he climbed up the steep hill and announced loudly, '*Peer-e-Hind mein Rewad*' meaning thereby that the Guru of Hindus is leaving. With a desire to receive Guru ji as gift from the Mughals, many started running away hysterically. By hitting with the arrow, Guru ji threw away the torch from the hands of torch-bearer as a result of which, darkness descended all-around. In the ensuing melee, Guru ji went far away.<sup>43</sup> In the pitch darkness of December night when Guru left the fortress, Mughal forces again attacked it but the fires of Bhai Jaita's guns *Nagini* and *Bhagini* did not allow the enemy to come near the fortress. By then, the darkness of the night had ended and sun-rays started falling on the fortress. The crest gifted by Guru ji was shining on the auspicious head of Bhai Jaita. The enemy heaved a sigh of relief. They thanked their God that Guru ji was still inside the fortress. Their honour had been saved otherwise what answer they had given to the Emperor that why an army of lacs could not capture Guru ji ; live or dead. From the activity inside the fortress, they had known that there is nobody alive inside the fortress except Guru ji but they were upset at the sound of two gun fires going in two different directions. So, they sometimes had the feeling that there are four men inside the fortress; two for loading the guns and two for firing. After sufficient passage of the day, the forces of the enemy could not come near the fortress.<sup>44</sup> Now when the entire arms ammunition of Bhai Jaita had exhausted, he opened the door of the fortress and attacked the enemy with swords. He killed many of the army with his sword. The brave *Rangreta* justified the title given by Guru ji till his last breath. The

<sup>35</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru Ka Beta*, P-254.

<sup>36</sup> Mohinder Kaur Gill, *Bhai Jaita Guru Ka Beta*, P-120.

<sup>37</sup> Naranjan Arfi, *Rangretion Da Ithas*, P-325.

<sup>38</sup> Punjabi Tribune, 3, March, 1997.

<sup>39</sup> Jaswant Singh, *Guru Ka Beta*, P-265.

<sup>40</sup> Naranjan Arfi, *Rangretian Da Ithas*, P-332.

<sup>41</sup> Giani Nishan Singh Gandiwind, *Shaheed Babab Jiwan Singh Jiwan, Rachna Te Viaakhaia*, P-111.

<sup>42</sup> Ajit, 21, December, 1992.

<sup>43</sup> Punjabi Tribune, 3, March, 1997.

<sup>44</sup> Sahib Singh, *Jeewan Birtant Guru Gobind Singh*, Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 1988, P-181.

enemy perforated the body of that warrior by bullets and arrows at different places. After killing many of the enemy, that 'Rangreta Guru ka Beta', the son of a low caste family, last attained martyrdom on December 22, 1704 near the minaret of the fortress and became immortal.<sup>45</sup>



<sup>45</sup> Gurdwara Gazette (ed.) Daljit Singh Bedi, S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1993, P-22.